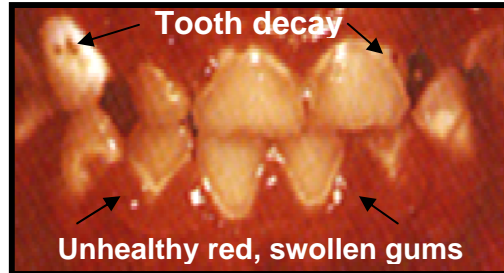


# How Can You Check Baby's Teeth?

Each day when you clean your baby's teeth and gums:

- ✓ Lay baby's head on your lap and gently push back the lips.
- ✓ Look at the front and back of all upper teeth, then all lower teeth.
- ✓ If you see chalky white, brown or black spots on the teeth, take baby to the dentist.



## What Should You Do?

Take your child to a dentist by **age 1**. To find a dentist:



- Ask your child's doctor for a referral
- Ask a friend, relative, or coworker
- If you have Medi-Cal, contact Denti-Cal at 1-800-322-6384 or [www.denti-cal.ca.gov](http://www.denti-cal.ca.gov)
- Contact the California Dental Association at 1-800-CDA-SMILE (232-7645) or [www.cda.org/PublicResources/FindaDentist](http://www.cda.org/PublicResources/FindaDentist)
- Contact Child Health & Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program at your health department [www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/chdp](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/chdp)

# Prevent Tooth Decay in Babies and Toddlers

Do you want this?

Tooth Decay



Unhealthy Child



OR

Do you want this?

Healthy Teeth and Gums



Healthy Child



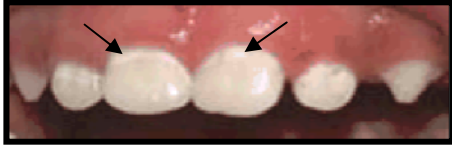
**Baby Teeth Are Important!**

- To Chew    •To Talk    •To Smile    •To Feel Good
- To Be Healthy    •To Save Room For Adult Teeth

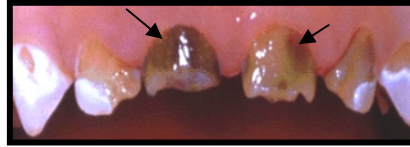
# What Is Tooth Decay (Cavities)?

It is a disease that is caused by germs in the mouth.

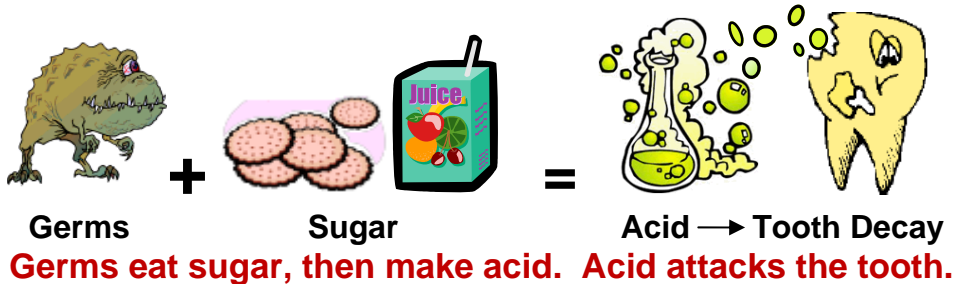
Can start when first tooth appears (white line on tooth near gums)



Leads to pain, infection and can destroy teeth



## How Does Tooth Decay Happen?



### GERMS

Tooth decay germs can be passed from your mouth to your child's mouth.

#### Do not share:

- Cups
- Straws
- Spoons/Forks
- Toothbrushes

**Do not "clean" pacifier with your mouth.**

### SUGAR

When sugar stays on teeth, tooth decay can start, especially if your child:

- Falls asleep with the bottle
- Sips from a bottle or cup all day

#### Sugar hides in:

- Milk/Formula
- Cereal
- Juice
- Soda
- Sweet drinks
- Medicine
- Cookies, Crackers, Chips

# What Can You Do To Protect Baby Teeth?

## Take care of your own teeth:

- Brush morning and before bed and floss daily
- Visit your dentist twice a year
- Limit sweet, sticky foods, sodas and sugary drinks
- Chew sugarless gum with "xylitol" after meals/snacks

Fluoride Toothpaste (pea size)



## Take care of baby's teeth:

- Put only breast milk or formula in bottle
- Stop bottle by age one



- Brush baby's teeth twice a day with a dab of fluoride toothpaste

Fluoride Toothpaste (rice grain size)



- Take baby to dentist by age one, then every 6 months
- Ask doctor about fluoride varnish and drops/tablets

